

Abstract:

At the Rat Genome Database (RGD, <http://rgd.mcw.edu>), we consider education to be a two way street. From the outset, we have strived to not only educate our users on rat genomics, genetics and physiology, but also to be educated by our users. We rely on our users to teach us what data and tools are important to them, to help us refine our data and to aid us in finding our inaccuracies and correcting them. RGD utilizes user feedback forms, training workshops, seminars and video tutorials to educate users and non-users alike, as well as to get feedback from our users regarding whether we're meeting their needs and how we could serve them more effectively.

RGD's Rat Community Videos (http://rgd.mcw.edu/wg/home/rgd_rat_community_videos/) are designed to instruct our users on the nuances of our tools and data. Whether it is a snippet video showing you what you can enter into the Rat Genome Browser search box and what the resulting display will look like, or a general introduction to what that hot new term "ontology" means and how using ontologies can help you in your research, RGD's tutorial videos present the information in a concise, easy to understand format. We then utilize feedback from the videos, web statistics on their usage and questions from our users to inform our decisions regarding subjects for new videos.

RGD's new Visiting Scientist program is also designed to be education in both directions. RGD now has funds available to bring in and host scientists from the research community to teach us about key areas of genomic and physiologic science. Then we in turn can improve and expand our data and our tools, allowing us to further educate our users about these valuable new resources.

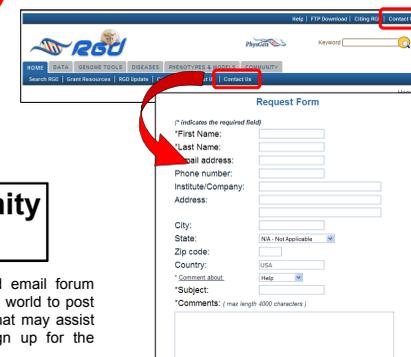
Rat Genome Database page on Facebook

RGD now has a page on Facebook. We use this to let you know what we are doing, and we hope you'll use it to let us know what you're doing, what you think about our data and our website and how we can help you achieve your research goals more efficiently. If you become a "fan" of RGD you can get updates automatically delivered to your Wall.



User Requests

For questions, comments, suggestions and requests click on the "Contact Us" links at the top of the RGD web pages. Emails are answered within one business day whenever possible.



Request Form

*Indicates the required field

*First Name:

*Last Name:

*Email address:

Phone number:

Institution/Company:

Address:

City:

State: (N/A - Not Applicable)

Zip code:

Country: (USA)

*Comment about: (Help)

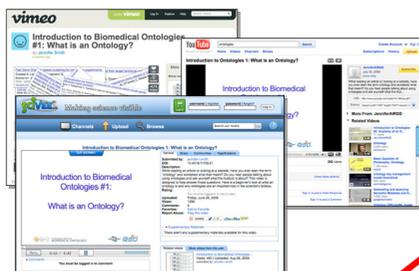
*Subject:

*Comments: (max length 4000 characters)

Rat Community Videos

RGD has produced video tutorials on both very specific topics such as what you can enter into the search box in the GBrowse tool, to more general topics such as "What is an Ontology?"

RGD posts videos on three websites: YouTube, Vimeo and SciVee. All three sites track the number of views for each video giving RGD a useful metric to gauge how effective a video is.



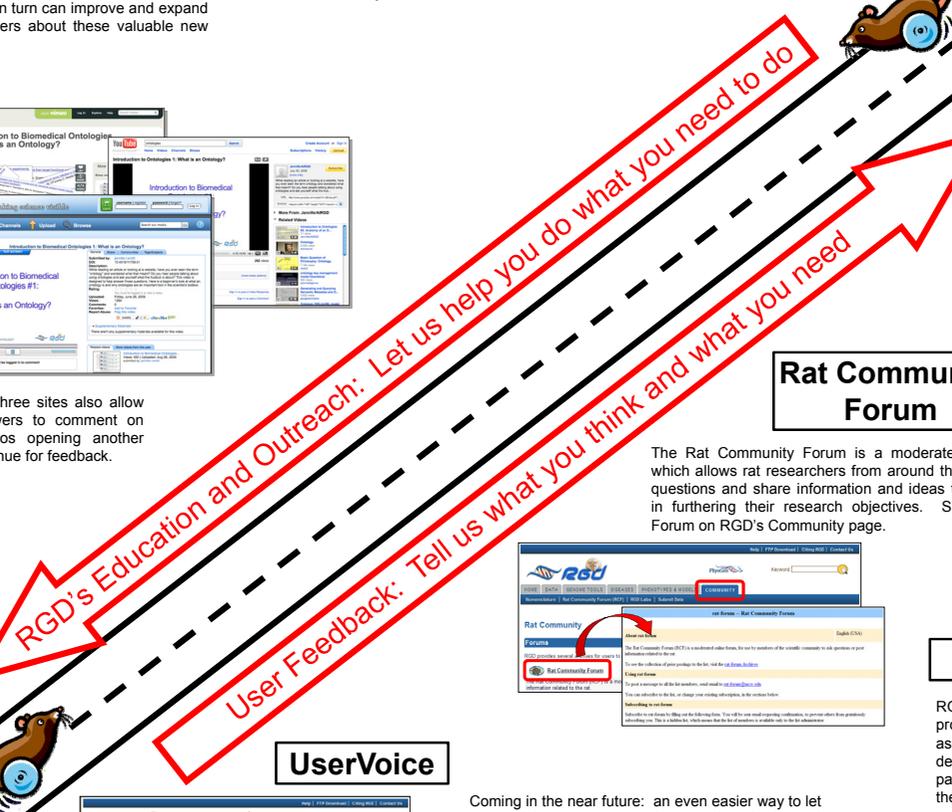
All three sites also allow viewers to comment on videos opening another avenue for feedback.



RGD's Rat Community Videos page provides links to individual pages for tutorial videos. Each video page contains information about the video and a poll which allows users to let us know if the video itself can be viewed directly on the RGD page.



RGD's User Community



Rat Community Forum

The Rat Community Forum is a moderated email forum which allows rat researchers from around the world to post questions and share information and ideas that may assist in furthering their research objectives. Sign up for the Forum on RGD's Community page.



UserVoice

Coming in the near future: an even easier way to let your opinions, requests and suggestions be known! RGD is in the process of adding the "UserVoice" feedback mechanism to our website. This will allow our users to share their ideas without ever leaving the webpage they are on. Just click on the tab at the side of the window to enter your comment or see what others are saying.



This work was supported by grant HL064541 from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and through a Driving Biological Project collaboration with the National Center for Biomedical Ontology (HG004028-05)

Visiting Scientist Program

RGD is currently working on instituting a "Visiting Scientist" program where researchers with expertise in a particular area such as copy number variants, stem cell development, strain development, etc. are invited to visit RGD for 2-3 days and/or participate in teleconferences to educate RGD staff and to aid in the integration of new data types and resources.

We expect to release a call for applications for the Visiting Scientist program in February of 2010. If you are interested in participating in this program please talk to one of the RGD staff or make sure you are signed up for the Rat Community Forum or are a fan of RGD on Facebook.

